



# *William Linnard*

Soldier, Carpenter, Artisan and Rare Public Servant



William Linnard (1750-1835) is a man whose accomplishments have been obscured by the passage of time. Enough information exists in the historical records, however, to reveal the many qualities of an “average” member of Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church whose achievements were far above average.

## *Patriot*

William Linnard<sup>1</sup> was a member of Reverend George Duffield’s congregation. He followed the Patriot Pastor into military service in 1777, joining Philadelphia’s militias during the Revolution. He also became associated with Duffield as a Captain-Lieutenant in the Sixth Company of Col. Jehu Eyre’s Artillery Battalion. Philadelphia’s militias were critical to the city’s defenses, and in the summer of 1777 the British army began moving towards Philadelphia to seize the home of the rebellious Continental Congress.

The British planned to capture the capital of the new nation by landing on the Chesapeake Bay and marching northeast to Philadelphia. To prevent the loss of the city, General George Washington chose to occupy high ground at Chadds Ford on the Brandywine and stop the British from crossing the Brandywine Creek. To funnel the British to Chadds Ford, Washington on the morning of 9 September 1777 placed his troops along the Brandywine River. Their goal: to guard the main fords north and south of Chadds Ford. Linnard was part of the detachment of troops at Pyle’s Ford, south of Chadds Ford. However, on 11 September 1777, the British found another ford unknown to Washington. They outflanked the Americans, who retreated. This left the way open to Philadelphia, which the British occupied on 26 September 1777.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, Linnard soon found another opportunity to face the British. After occupying Philadelphia, British General Howe left part of his army in the city and moved the rest to Germantown, then a small village about five miles from the city. General Washington wanted to take advantage of this division and surprise the British as he had at Trenton in 1776. However, Washington’s plan was far too complicated for the ill-trained American army, and the result was another defeat for the Americans. Linnard, however, did play a part. On 11 September 1777 he



*“Nation Makers” by Howard Pyle depicts a scene from the Battle of Brandywine (c. 1903). This painting hangs in the Brandywine River Museum.*

transferred to the city’s First Artillery. When the Battle of Germantown began on 4 October 1777, Linnard ordered the placement of a cannon at the mouth of the Wissahickon Creek, where it enters the Schuylkill River, and from that vantage point he fired upon Hessian troops.<sup>3</sup>

Two years later, on 14 June 1779, Linnard was promoted to Captain. Even though the last battle of the Revolution took place two years later at Yorktown, and the Treaty of Paris ensuring American independence and ending the war two years after that, Linnard’s service to his country did not end there. Linnard became a legislator and would again serve in the military as the provisioner of material for the army.<sup>4</sup>

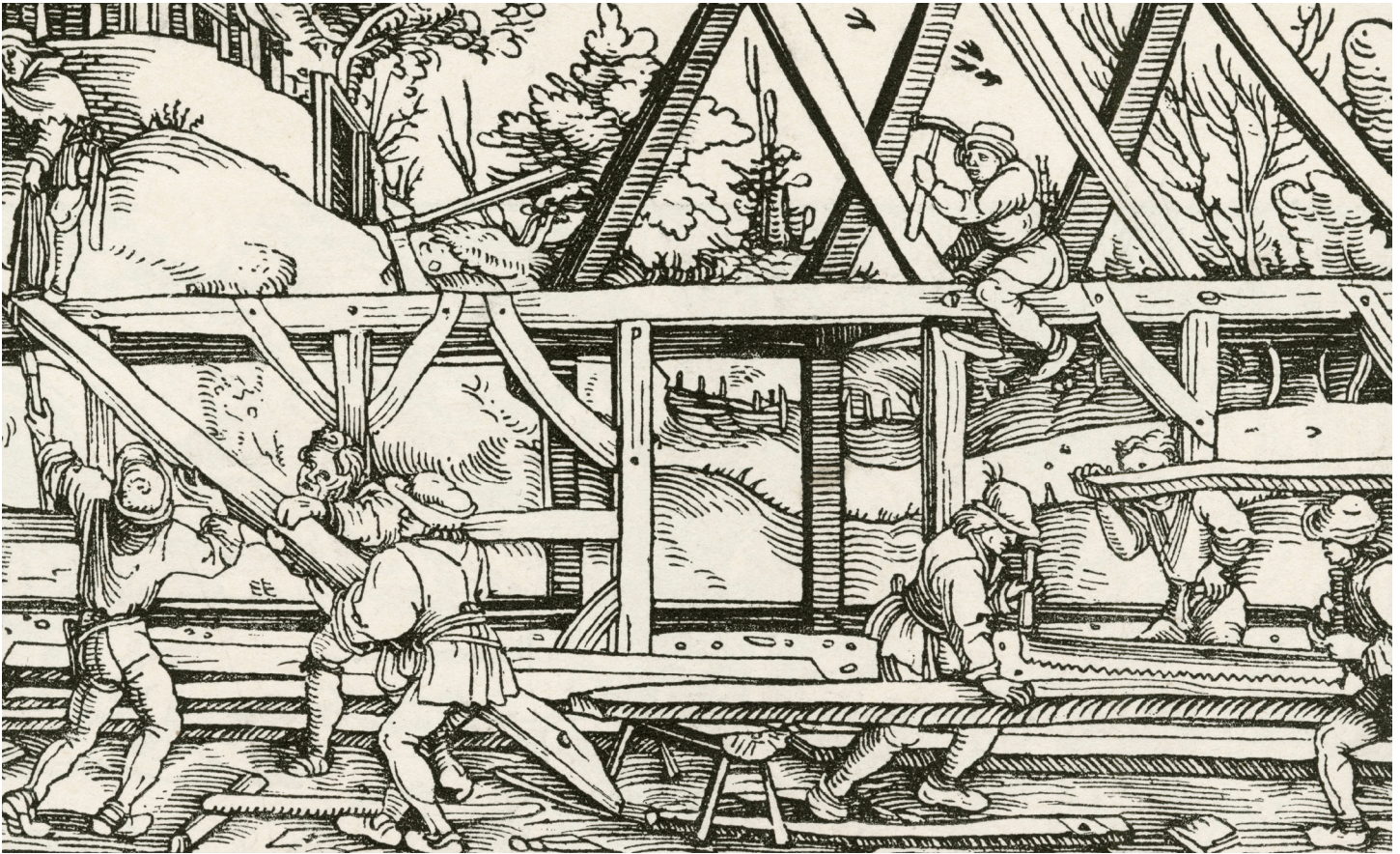
<sup>1</sup> The Daughters of the American Revolution uses the spelling of “Leonard,” which is not used elsewhere. DAR, “Leonard, William,” [https://services.dar.org/public/dar\\_research/search\\_adb/default.cfm](https://services.dar.org/public/dar_research/search_adb/default.cfm), as of July 23, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Brandywine Battlefield Historic Site, “History of the Battle of Brandywine,” <https://www.ushistory.org/brandywine/thestory.htm> as of May 25, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Alice L. George, *Philadelphia: A Pictorial Celebration*, (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., 2006), 26.

<sup>4</sup> Revolutionary War Journal website, “Battle of Germantown - Part 2,” <http://www.revolutionarywarjournal.com/battle-of-germantown-part-2/> as of May 25, 2020





*Carpenters building a house from wood.*

## *Artisan and Public Man*

Linnard was a Renaissance man, accomplished in a variety of endeavors. He was a skilled artisan and member of Philadelphia's esteemed Carpenters' Company. Founded in 1724, this still-existing organization was one of the most important associations in eighteenth-century Philadelphia. Its members were neither carpenters as we use the term, nor were they a company in the sense of a business. The term "company" in the eighteenth century meant "association" as used in England, which is how these artisans used the term – taking their cue from the Mother Country. The early members of the Carpenters' Company who came from Great Britain knew of – and emulated – London's Worshipful Company of Carpenters, and its guild traditions of the Middle Ages.<sup>5</sup> These Philadelphians were skilled craftsmen, artisans who created much of the outstanding woodwork for what is now known as Independence Hall. However, their distinction was in creating plans for buildings, hiring workers such as carpenters, bricklayers, and glaziers, and then supervising construction and engineering. They were Philadelphia's "Master Builders."

<sup>5</sup> Carpenters' Hall website, "The Company," <https://www.carpentershall.org/about-the-company> as of May 23, 2020.

An active and important member of the Carpenters' Committee, William Linnard served as warden, vice president for seven years, and for fourteen years was a member of the committee of the Book of Prices, which dealt with how much carpenters should be compensated for their work.<sup>6</sup> In 1792 the Company asked Linnard to complete the decorative frontispiece and fanlight enclosing the south entrance of Carpenter's Hall; he received 12 pounds, two shillings, six pence for the job a year later.<sup>7</sup> At various times Linnard was also on the Managing Committee of the Carpenters' Company.<sup>8</sup> And, Linnard created a "valuable library" of his own,<sup>9</sup> emulating Benjamin Franklin's Library Company of Philadelphia, which was located in Carpenters Hall from 1773 to 1791.

Linnard bridged an era of great change. Artisans produced goods for centuries, but now Americans were on the brink of humanity's greatest change since the Agricultural Revolution of 10,000 years earlier. The Industrial Revolution, beginning in Great Britain in the first decades of the eighteenth century, was based on coal, steam, and textiles. America played a crucial

<sup>6</sup> "William Linnard," Old Pine Conservancy, Ronn Shaffer.

<sup>7</sup> Carpenters' Hall website, "Lumber for the Builders," <https://www.carpentershall.org/lumber-for-the-builders> as of May 23, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> *Aurora General Advertiser* (Philadelphia, PA) 24 January 1804, 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Christian Biography Vol. 6: Lives of William Cosper, Mrs Ann H. Judson, Miss Anna Jane Linnard*, Rev. Matthew Henry (London: Religious Tract Society, ND), 6.



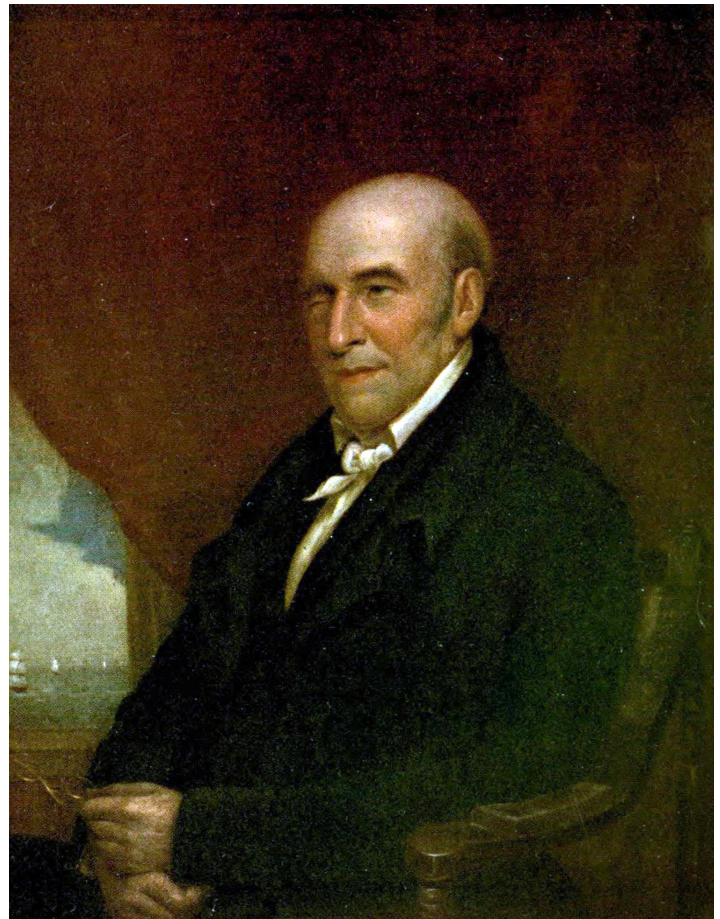
role in this textile production because of the 1793 invention of the cotton gin. That device dramatically decreased the cost of processing cotton - and began the entrenchment of slavery as the means of producing it. Textiles were made in Philadelphia since the city's inception, in ways that had existed for centuries. But, Linnard was among the earliest businessmen to realize the advantages of the *industrial* production of textiles. In 1806 Linnard became one of the directors of the Philadelphia Domestic Society, a corporation for processing raw materials into textiles. The president of this enterprise was the great Philadelphia businessman Stephen Girard. Girard was the richest man in the United States when he died nearly thirty years later, and was listed in 1996 as the fourth richest American since its founding.<sup>10</sup> Linnard was in his early 50s when he got involved in this business, showing a flexibility and willingness to take chances not usually associated with middle age.

With his business, social, military, and religious connections, it is unsurprising that William Linnard became involved in Philadelphia politics. He was elected as a representative from Philadelphia to two terms in the State Assembly (1797 and 1800).<sup>11</sup> And he was on the board of the City and Marine Hospitals during the last decade of the eighteenth century, including the desperate time of Philadelphia's Yellow Fever Epidemic that claimed 10,000 lives in 1793.<sup>12</sup> Linnard's middle-age was really a time of transformation.

Most important for his future endeavors, Linnard's politics led him to become an early member of Thomas Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. He was an active supporter of candidates from that party, and worked hard for the reelection Dr. Michael Leib, the Democratic-Republican candidate for Congress.<sup>13</sup> Being a prominent member of Thomas Jefferson's party played a part in Jefferson's appointing him to an important - and lucrative - position with the federal government: overseeing provisions for the American army.

## *Provisioning*

Before the Civil War, the United States Army was never large by European standards. From their English roots to the early 20th century, Americans believed that a



*Stephen Girard by J.R. Lambdin (c. 1918) from a posthumous portrait by B. Otis.*

large, standing army in peacetime would lead to tyranny. Moreover, they were protected by the large oceans from foreign dangers. So, the small army under Presidents Washington and Adams shrank even more as the 19th century dawned. President Thomas Jefferson and Congress reduced the army to one regiment of artillery and two of infantry, for a total of just over 3,200 soldiers. Most of them served on the frontiers, suppressing the Native Americans and pushing them out of territories being opened to white settlers. Simultaneously, this small army established American sovereignty against British, Spanish, and French claims.

The army was not only small. It was far-flung due to the size of the country, which doubled in size with the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. At this time, Linnard was the military agent for the Middle Department, one of the three departments responsible for provisioning the army. The Northern Department encompassed military posts on the northern and western lakes. The Southern Department took in New Orleans and the Mississippi Territory south of the 32nd degree latitude (the southern part of New Mexico's border with Texas). The Middle Department covered everything else - the overwhelming majority of the country.

<sup>10</sup> *Constitution of the Philadelphia Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Manufacture* (Philadelphia: D. Hogan, 1806), 1-6.

<sup>11</sup> *Constitution of the Philadelphia Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Manufacture* (Philadelphia: D. Hogan, 1806), 1-6.

<sup>12</sup> *Christian Biography Vol. 6: Lives of William Cowper, Mrs Ann H. Judson, Miss Anna Jane Linnard, Rev. Matthew Henry* (London: Religious Tract Society, ND), 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Aurora General Advertiser*, 26 July 1802, 2.





"Fort Mifflin Pennsylvania" by Seth Eastman (1870).

Linnard lived in Philadelphia, the principal depository for military stores and goods for American Indians. He procured goods and material and then sent them to the various places within his department. The nation's spatial increase greatly enlarged Linnard's responsibilities, too, and he wanted that increase in duties matched by a pay increase. "The augmentation of the army and the extension of our Indian relations, have necessarily increased the duties of the military agents, particularly those of [Linnard]."<sup>14</sup>

As a result of his performance, Linnard earned a salary raise to \$1482 per year in 1809, equal to a colonel's pay.<sup>15</sup> The head of the other two departments received \$1217, the pay of a lieutenant colonel. During the same period, the average daily wage for an artisan was \$1.47 and \$0.75 for laborers; Linnard's was more than \$4 per day.<sup>16</sup>

The country's vastness coupled with a primitive transportation system made Linnard's job difficult. One example of his long-range supply problem involved medical and hospital stores sent by Linnard

in Philadelphia to New Orleans, on the schooner *Hillsman*. It sailed on 7 January 1809, but became ice-bound until 5 March 1809. The goods arrived in New Orleans 5 April 1809. Similarly, clothing sent on the brig *North Star* on 6 July 1809 arrived in New Orleans on 22 August 1809.<sup>17</sup> And, transport by water was the best mode of transportation at the time. These normal problems of supply worsened as the United States inched toward another war with a European power.

When deteriorating relations with Great Britain eventually lead to a declaration of war in 1812, Congress reinstated the position of Quartermaster General. By the end of the war Linnard had achieved the rank of Major, Deputy Quartermaster General.<sup>18</sup> Linnard continued to serve in that capacity after the war. Later, when a new hospital was needed at Fort Mifflin, in the Delaware River near Philadelphia, it was built to plans submitted by both the surgeon in charge and Major William Linnard, commander at the time, allowing Linnard to combine his artisanal building skills with his authority as Quartermaster.<sup>19</sup> Linnard continued to rise

<sup>14</sup> Adolphus Washington Greely, *Public Documents of the First Fourteen Congresses* (Washington: GPO, 1963), 518.

<sup>15</sup> *Report of the Secretary of War on the Petition of William Linnard, Military Agent for the Middle Department, referred to him by an Order of the House on the Thirty-first ultimo, June 6, 1809.* (Washington, D.C.: A and G. Way, 1809)

<sup>16</sup> Adams, Donald R. "Wage Rates in the Early National Period: Philadelphia, 1785-1830." *The Journal of Economic History* 28, no. 3 (1968): 404-26. Accessed May 25, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/2116466](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2116466).

<sup>17</sup> *The United States Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA) 28 May 1810, 1.

<sup>18</sup> United States Congress, *American State Papers: Documents, Legislative and Executive of the Congress of the United States Part 5, Vol 2*, (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1834) 515

<sup>19</sup> Historical Marker Project, "Hospital & Mess Hall," [https://historicalmarkerproject.com/markers/HM88P\\_hospital-mess-hall\\_Philadelphia-PA.html](https://historicalmarkerproject.com/markers/HM88P_hospital-mess-hall_Philadelphia-PA.html) as of May 23, 2020; Carpenters' Hall website, "Lumber for the Builders," <https://www.carpentershall.org/lumber-for-the-builders> as of May 23, 2020.





in the ranks until he became Brevet Lieutenant Colonel on 15 June 1825. He “died in service” on 20 September 1835.<sup>20</sup> After more than three decades of service, he was one of the prominent Americans military leaders of the Antebellum period. Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott offered high praise of Linnard after his death:

*William Linnard, long “military agent,” without rank, and only made quartermaster-general, with the rank of colonel, in 1813, was a public servant of the rarest merit. For thirty-three years he made, at Philadelphia, all disbursements on account of the army, amounting to fifty odd millions, without the loss of a cent, and at the smallest cost in storage, clerk hire, and other incidental expenses ever known. He personally performed double, if not treble, the amount of ordinary labour (sic). His integrity at the death, in 1835, had long been proverbial.*<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> General Society of the War of 1812, *Constitution and Register of Membership of the General Society of the War of 1812*, June 1, 1908 (Washington, D.C.: The Law Reporter Printing Co., 1908), 63.

<sup>21</sup> Timothy D. Johnson (ed.), *Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Winfield Scott*, (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2015), 17-18

## *The Corps of Discovery and Linnard*

William Linnard’s most unusual project came after Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the country with the Louisiana Purchase. Jefferson then decided to send an expedition across the continent. His goals: to find a river route to the Pacific Ocean, to catalog the discoveries and other contents of acquisition, and establish American sovereignty in an area contested by the British, Spanish, and Russians.

Jefferson chose Meriwether Lewis to lead the volunteer group in this journey, which was unofficially designated as the Corps of Volunteers for North Western Discovery. That name captures the scope of this monumental trek, the first time anyone crossed the American continent and back. From his appointment as leader of the expedition in the winter of 1803 to the spring of 1804, Meriwether Lewis was the de facto Quartermaster Captain for the volunteer unit. In gathering equipment for the trek across the continent Lewis had many dealings with William Linnard.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Discovering Lewis & Clark, “Schuykill Arsenal to Wheeling,” <https://www.lewis-clark.org/article/2980> as of May 22, 2020.





Map of Lewis and Clark's Track, Across the Western Portion of North America (1814).

Linnard was one of four army personnel helping Lewis gather provisions. Transporting goods over great distances was routine for Linnard. He oversaw the transport of all military and medical stores between the Schuykill Arsenal in Philadelphia and the far-flung outposts of his district: down the Atlantic Coast from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to Fort McHenry at Baltimore, Maryland, and westward as far as Chickasaw Bluffs, and Forts Massac and Kaskaskia in the Illinois country.

Lewis created a list of items needed for a two-year exploration of an unknown land filled with potentially hostile people. Among the items on his lengthy list of requested materials were: scientific instruments; tools for writing and drawing; arms and gun powder (including tomahawks); clothes (30 pairs of socks); kettles; nails; vices; phosphorus; 150 lbs. of portable soup; American Indian presents (wampum, shirts, cloth, 288 small knives, ribbon, trinkets for ear, nose, fingers); transportation (60' keel boat; 40' iron frame canoe); and, medicine (12 oz. opium, four pewter penis syringes for

treating gonorrhea).<sup>23</sup>

The first job for Linnard was to find a wagoner to haul everything Lewis had requisitioned and take it to Pittsburgh. These supplies included rifles, tomahawks, knives, the frame for Lewis' "iron boat," and other manufactured items. All transportation at this time, for people and/or freight or persons, was problematic, for a variety of reasons. Lewis explained his frustration in a short letter to Jefferson. The man Linnard hired to transport goods for Lewis arrived in Harpers Ferry, but "determined that his team was not sufficiently strong to take the whole of the articles . . . and therefore took none of them." It took a week to find a substitute—a man with "a light two horse-waggon" who promised to set out with them. "In this however he has disappointed me," Lewis groaned, "and I have been obliged to engage a second person who will be here this evening in time to load and will go on early in the morning."

Except for the material that he shipped directly

23 H. C. Powers, "Equipment of the Lewis and Clark Exploring Expedition," *Proceedings of the Academy of Science and Letters of Sioux City, Iowa*, 1903-4, Vol. 1, (Sioux City, IA: Perkins Bros. Co., 1904), 78-82. Males with gonorrhea were treated by injecting mercury, the source of the saying "A night with Venus can lead to a lifetime with Mercury."





*Painting of the Lewis and Clark expedition in a canoe meeting some Native Americans by Charles Marion Russell (1905).*

from Harpers Ferry to Pittsburgh, everything else was to be assembled at the Schuylkill Arsenal and shipped overland to Pittsburgh. After being deposited there, it was then loaded onto the waiting keelboat. To get supplies to Pittsburgh, Linnard provided Lewis with “a strong and effective team” that would haul 3,500 pounds of supplies and equipment. Strong horses were mandatory, as the single trans-Allegheny road between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh was, as Lewis wrote, “by no means good,” adding, “If a team could be provided with five horses perhaps it would be better.” Despite the difficulties with a problematic road, it must be remembered that the distance between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh was roughly one-tenth the distance that Lewis & Clark had to cross on their way to the Pacific Ocean - with no roads whatsoever.

Linnard’s duties were much more involved than supplying a “wish list” presented by Lewis. This following memo of Lewis was no doubt addressed to Linnard:

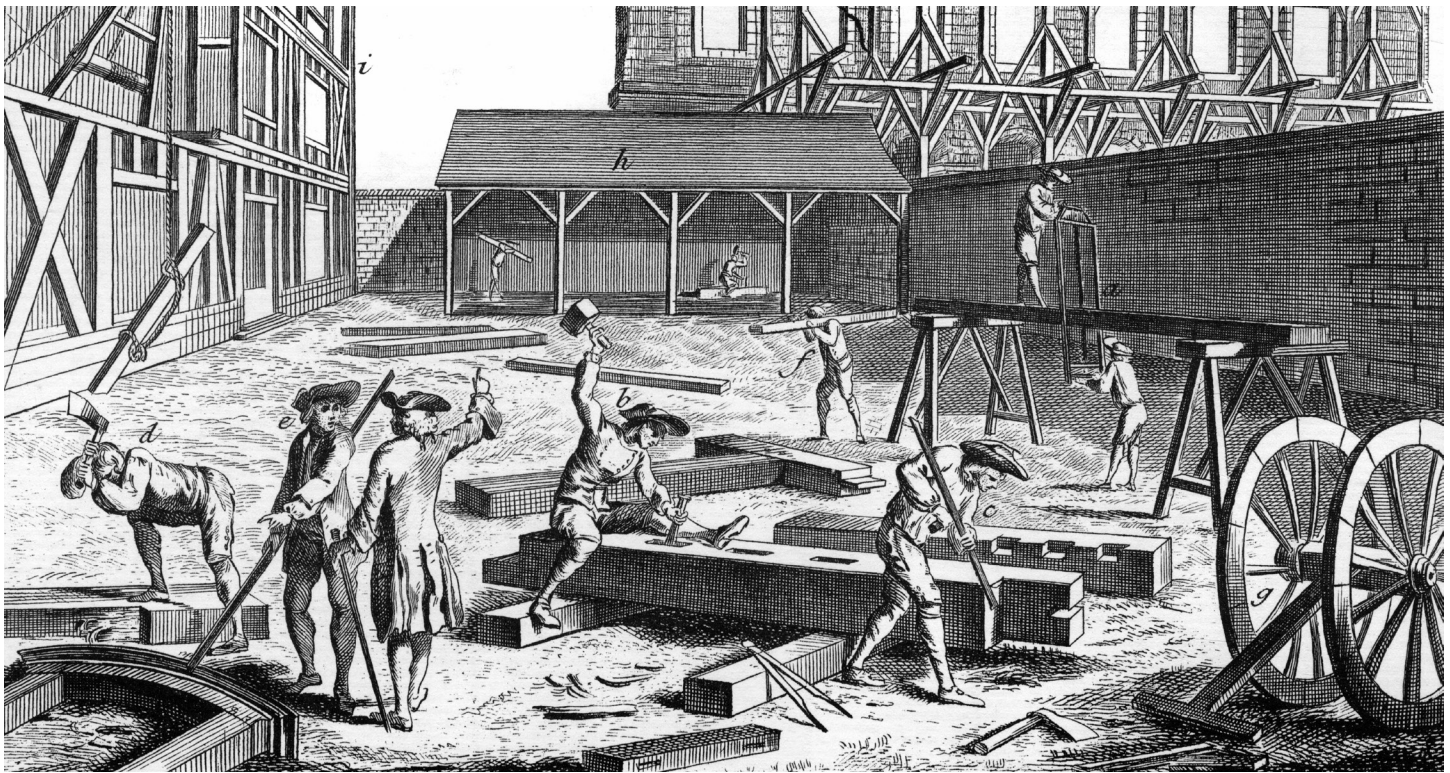
*Each article to be weighed separate, and the weight & price extended in the Invoice under the appropriate Head. In packing no regard need be had to the different divisions or classes as specified in the Invoice but pack'd indiscriminately as may be most advantageous, regard being paid to such articles as may be most likely to receive damage. The blankets may be used in the packing for the protection of the goods. Such articles as are taken from the Military stores are to be enter'd in the invoice under their proper heads with weight extend'd & without price.*

The Lewis and Clark Expedition was a resounding success, and William Linnard helped to insure it got off to a good start.

### *Patriarch & Presbyterian*

William Linnard and his wife, Susanna McMullin,





*Carpenters in the 18th century.*

were married in 1776, and they had eleven children together, nine of which survived into adulthood. When he was 61 years old, his household was even more crowded, as the 1810 Federal Census listed seventeen people living there, nine of them under the age of 10.<sup>24</sup> His two oldest sons became highly successful lumber merchants, a practice much of the family would continue to run. Linnard died in 1835 at the ripe age of 86 and was buried at Third Presbyterian's graveyard next to Susanna, who had predeceased him; they are buried with three of their children.

Before being a husband, father, artisan, budding industrialist, and provisioner of material to the Army and the first expedition to transverse the continent, William Linnard was a Presbyterian. He was an early member of Third Presbyterian Church (a/k/a Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church), living near the church according to the 1793 Pennsylvania Septennial Census. It listed him as a "Laborer" living in the Dock Ward, an area that went from the Delaware River up Spruce Street to Fourth Street, then up to Walnut, and back down to the river.

Linnard was a dedicated Presbyterian. He was an early trustee of Third Church during the time of George Duffield and went on to be a prominent officer and elder of the church, serving as treasurer for over a

generation. His skill as an artisan was used to benefit the church, which was gutted by the British during their occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-1778. In 1793, he rebuilt the church's interior with galleries. He was also a Presbyterian who wanted quiet religious services undisturbed by the noises of America's largest city. So when traffic noise on Pine Street became bothersome, the congregations of Second and Third Presbyterian churches successfully petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1793 to ban traffic near churches during their Sunday services. William Linnard was the one person the congregation selected to pick the spot to stretch the chain across the streets and prevent carriages from disturbing church services.

## *Conclusion*

The picture of William Linnard that emerges from historical evidence is a man who reflects the transformation from colonial Enlightenment to American industrialism. His was a time before specialization and Linnard was a man - public and private - of many interests and multiple careers: artisan, industrialist, warrior, official. Due to his skills and lifetime connections, he participated in two wars, associated with the richest man in America, and was an integral part of the greatest exploratory expedition in American history.

24 Ancestry.com, "1810 United States Federal Census for William Linnard (sic)," [https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7613/4433387\\_00089?pid=522146&treeid=&personid=&src=&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Tee1113&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/interactive/7613/4433387_00089?pid=522146&treeid=&personid=&src=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Tee1113&_phstart=successSource) as of May 23, 2020.





*We hope you have enjoyed reading this third publication of Heritage Magazine, dedicated to the life of Colonel William Linnard. His many accomplishments and contributions during and after the Revolutionary War have been eloquently captured by our historian Daniel Campbell, Ph.D. and vividly illustrated by our graphic designer Amy Grant.*

*Despite the current pandemic, the work of Old Pine Conservancy continues. The development of a self-guided audio tour is well under way, thanks to the tireless work of Dr. Campbell and our university intern Kevin Williams. **Support for our student interns comes directly from donations.** We are also exploring options for an evaluation of gravestones and their maintenance.*

*The positive response to our annual appeal enabled us to fund these two very important projects. We are grateful to all who have so generously contributed to these efforts. At the heart of our endeavors is the work of both board members and volunteers, such as Linda Schrader.*

*All donations go directly to helping us fulfill our mission to preserve this historic site for future generations. Please visit our website at [www.oldpineconservancy.org](http://www.oldpineconservancy.org) to find out how you can be part of this work.*

*Sincerely,*

*Old Pine Conservancy Board*



## Highlights from 2020



*On Mar. 7, 2020, the Old Pine Conservancy board presented longtime board member Bob Eck with a certificate honoring his many years of dedicated service.*



*On Jul. 10, 2020, David Morrison, a descendant of Joseph Lyndall, visited his ancestor's grave at Old Pine Church.*



*On Aug. 22, 2020, Albert Meinster adopted one of the patriots buried in our churchyard.*





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### *Who We Are*

Old Pine Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization registered in Pennsylvania. We actively seek funding from foundations and government resources – as well as from individuals and private historical organizations – as part of our long- and short-term planning.

### *Our Mission and Goals*

The Board of Trustees of the Old Pine Conservancy invites you to participate with us in our journey into the past – to help us understand our present and reshape our future.



We preserve the historic Old Pine Street Church graveyard, a nationally recognized site, that contains the graves of 285 veterans of the American Revolution.



We conduct research into the lives of those buried here and publish biographical sketches we make available to the community on our website.



We conduct tours and invite our audience to not only interpret the significance of this site, but also share their own experience.



We develop educational programs that engage all citizens in exploring and understanding our collective past and its impact on us today.



We conduct lectures and programs that promote our educational program and explore our past.

### *About this Publication*

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**On the cover:** “Portrait of William Linnard” attributed to Rembrandt Peale (date unknown). A photo of this portrait was provided by Linnard’s descendant Nardi Hobler.